

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Kilky on 5/19/10.

Claims 30-53 have been canceled.

1. A method of providing product consistency for a particulate material comprising the steps of:

a) determining and maintaining at least one morphological value of a particulate material within a first target range and

b) maintaining at least one interfacial potential property value of the particulate material within a second target range, comprising:

i) determining at least one interfacial property value of the particulate material; and

ii) adjusting at least one process variable of a process for producing the particulate material, wherein the adjustment maintains the interfacial potential property value within the second target range, wherein said particulate material is a carbon black or silica, and wherein said particulate material has said morphological value and said interfacial potential property value.

Art Unit: 1797

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of maintaining at least one chemical value of the particulate material.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the chemical value is pH or functional group level.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein the particulate material is fumed silica.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein the morphological value is surface area, particle size, structure, porosity, or combinations thereof.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein the first target range for the morphological value is within about 10% of the morphological value.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein the second target range for the interfacial potential property value is within about 50% of the interfacial potential property value.
11. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of maintaining at least one morphological value of a particulate material comprises
 - i) determining at least one morphological value of the particulate material; and
 - ii) adjusting at least one process variable of a process for producing the particulate material, wherein the adjustment maintains the morphological value within the first target range.

Art Unit: 1797

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the morphological value is determined during the process for producing the particulate material.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein the morphological value is determined prior to shipping the particulate material to a customer.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the interfacial potential property value is determined during the process for producing the particulate material.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the interfacial potential property value is determined prior to shipping the particulate material to a customer.

17. The method of claim 11, wherein the morphological value is determined by liquid adsorption, vapor adsorption, microscopy, or combinations thereof.

18. The method of claim 11, wherein the morphological value is determined by an adsorption method using iodine, nitrogen, CTAB, DBP, or paraffin oil.

19. The method of claim 11, wherein the process variable is selected from the group consisting of: combustion stoichiometry, reactor quench length, feedstock composition, primary fuel type, level of downstream additives, and post treatment conditions.

Art Unit: 1797

21. The method of claim 1, wherein the interfacial potential property value is determined by an interfacial potential absorptometry method comprising performing an absorptometer test on the particulate material with first and second different liquids and measuring maximum torque or volume of liquid added for the different liquids.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the interfacial potential absorptometry method uses a liquid other than DBP or paraffin oil.

23. The method of claim 21, wherein the interfacial potential absorptometry method uses water, ethylene glycol, or mixtures thereof.

24. The method of claim 1, wherein the interfacial potential property value is determined by a wicking rate method comprising determining a difference in wicking rate for two or more liquids into equivalent packed columns of the particulate material.

25. The method of claim 1, wherein the interfacial potential property value is determined by a yield point method comprising measuring a degree of flocculation of the particulate material.

26. The method of claim 1, wherein the interfacial potential property value is determined by a interfacial potential vapor adsorption method comprising using a gas for gas adsorption analysis, wherein said gas is selected from water gas, ammonia gas, toluene gas, or ethanol gas.

Art Unit: 1797

27. The method of claim 1, wherein the interfacial potential property value is determined by an IGC method.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: In addition to the remarks of record, the cited prior art fails to teach or suggest the claimed method of providing product consistency of carbon black or silica by determining and maintaining at least one morphological value and additionally maintaining at least one interfacial potential property value by determining the interfacial value and adjusting a process variable that maintains the interfacial potential property value within a predetermined range.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to LYLE A. ALEXANDER whose telephone number is (571)272-1254. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jill Warden can be reached on 571-272-1267. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 1797

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/LYLE A ALEXANDER/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1797